



NATIONAL
STEWARDSHIP
ACTION COUNCILSM

ADVOCATING FOR A RESPONSIBLE, CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Our Continued Collaboration:

Policy Solutions That Support Wastewater Infrastructure

December 12, 2025

Heidi Sanborn, MPA, Executive Director/CEO

NSAC'S VISION: The United States attains a responsible, circular economy.

Who We Are



NATIONAL
STEWARDSHIP
ACTION COUNCILSM

ADVOCATING FOR A RESPONSIBLE, CIRCULAR ECONOMY

NSAC is a 501(c)4 nonprofit advocating for **producers to fairly share responsibility in a responsible, circular economy.**



STEWARDSHIP
ACTION
FOUNDATIONSM

EDUCATING FOR A RESPONSIBLE, CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Our affiliated 501(c)3 focuses on **public education, outreach, and collaboration.**



NATIONAL
STEWARDSHIP
ACTION COUNCILSM

ADVOCATING FOR A RESPONSIBLE, CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Our Unique Role

- We bridge policy, industry & environmental advocates at state and national levels
- We ensure fair frameworks that reward leadership, not punish innovation
- We're in the room when the rules are written
- Unlike "watchdog" groups focused only on problems, we build solutions - partnering with policymakers & industry to shape laws that protect communities, support innovation and drive a just, circular economy





A Decade-long Track Record of Success

2024: AB 863 (Aguiar-Curry): Carpet PCR content mandate & update) #3 - **1st in the US**
SB 1066 (Blakespear): Pyrotechnic Distress Flare EPR - **1st in the world – Veto**
SB 1143 (Allen): PaintCare Expansion Act- **1st in the US**



2022: SB 54 (Allen): Plastic Pollution Prevention & Packaging Producer Responsibility Act
AB 2208 (Kalra) : Mercury Lamp Pollution Prevention Act
AB 1894 (L. Rivas): Truth in Marketing & Advertising for Cannabis Vapes - **1st in the US**
AB 1793 (Quirk): Aquatic Toxicity Testing

2021: SB 343 (Allen): Truth in Recycling Labeling - **1st in the US**
AB 818 (Bloom): Truth in “Flushable” Wipes Labeling
AB 707 (Quirk): Mercury Thermostat EPR Program Update



2019: SB 726 (Caballero): HHW Reuse & Exchange
AB 729 (Chu): Carpet Program Reform #2

2018: SB 212 (Jackson, Ting, Gray): Medication & Needle EPR - 1st in the US



2017: AB 1158 (Chu): Carpet Program Reform #1

The bathtub is overflowing, what do you do?



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This information is confidential to NSAC and its members

What is a Circular Economy?

It is based on three principles:

1. **Design out waste and pollution.**
2. **Keep products and materials in use.**
3. **Regenerate natural systems.**

**Decouples economic activity
from the consumption of
finite resources.**



**ELLEN
MACARTHUR
FOUNDATION**



Policy Tools

1. Sales Ban (products or chemicals)
2. Truth in Labeling
3. Right to Repair
4. Product Stewardship
5. Extended Producer Responsibility
6. Deposits to Increase Collection



Questions to Ask Before Choosing a Tool:

- 1) How toxic is it?
- 2) Are there safer alternatives on the market, or coming?
- 3) What have other states or countries done with the product/chemical?
- 4) Is the international community limiting shipping/disposal?
- 5) How is the state determining the product to be hazardous? Is that causing problems?

Ending Labeling Lies

NSAC's Heidi Sanborn in: *The New York Times*

"Nobody should be able to
lie to the public"



Wipes “Truth in Labeling” Legislation

1. Washington (signed into law 3/25/2020)
2. Illinois (signed into law 8/6/2021)
3. Oregon (signed into law 6/8/2021)
4. California (signed into law 10/6/2021) – AB 818
(Bloom **co-sponsored by NSAC**, CASA, & Association of Nonwoven Fabrics Industry)
5. **National** - Advancing in Senate to floor vote (has passed House)

Introduced in Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, & in Washington D.C.

Action on disclosure/“truth in labeling” for products w/ PFAS (incl. CA) & prohibition of PFAS in products that are recyclable/compostable (SB 343-Allen, **co-sponsored by NSAC**)



Heidi Sanborn, NSAC Executive Director/CEO

2023 ANNUAL MEETING

#FlushSmart



83% of CA consumers surveyed agreed that we should clearly label non-flushable products to warn consumers against flushing the wrong thing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4oy8gOekBBA>

AB 818: Collection Study, 3/2024

- Objective: “gain an understanding of measurable consumer behavior by assessing and quantifying the types of wipes and other materials that are found in the collection system at dimensions greater than 1 inch.”
- Four sampling events at Inland Empire Utilities Agency (2) and Central Contra Costa Sanitation District (2)
- Outcomes: “implementing consumer education to discourage the flushing of the **top three categories could capture over 90 percent** of the recovered materials.”

Table 1. High-level average of total materials collected – Total California (N=1,745)

Category	Percentage
Paper Towels & Non-flushable Paper Products	52.8%
Nonwoven Labeled DNF	34.1%
Feminine Hygiene	7.2%
Trash	4.9%
Nonwoven – Labeled Flushable	0.9%

The WIPPES Act

- [H.R.2964](#) by Representative Lisa McClain (R-MI)
 - Status: Passed out of the House, in the referred to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation (6/12/2024)
 - Senate companion bill: [S.1350](#) by Senate Jeff Merkley (D-OR)
- [Sign-on coalition letter of support](#)

*“The damage from improperly flushed wet wipes and other non-flushable products have placed **a costly burden on public wastewater utilities**,” says Adam Krantz, CEO, National Association of the Clean Water Agencies (NACWA). “Labeling these items is an important step in consumer education that will ultimately benefit utilities and their ratepayers **by protecting critical wastewater infrastructure.**”*





HR 2269 & S1092: The Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention & Environmental Safety (WIPPES) Act



Rep. McClain (R-MI)



Rep. Mullin (D-CA)



Rep. Merkley (D-OR)



Rep. Collins (R-ME)



Rep. Kean (R-NJ)



Rep. Huffman (D-CA)
Rep. Pingree (D-ME)
Rep. Calvert (R-CA)
Rep. Jayapal (D-WA)
Rep. Correa (D-CA)
Rep. Blumenthal (D-CT)
Rep. King (I-ME)
Rep. Markey (D-MA)
Rep. Murray (D-WA)
Rep. Paddila (D-CA)
Rep. Wyden (D-OR)
Rep. Shaheen (D-NH)
Rep. Warren (D-MA)



- **Introduced 3/25/2025**, this bill will address health, ecosystem, and wastewater infrastructure concerns caused by the flushing of non-flushable wet wipes.
- **Status as of 6/23/25**: Passed the House by voice vote and sent to the Senate.
- **Next steps**: Get Senate to advance legislation to allow for Floor consideration, passage, and allow Congress to ultimately pass a final bill.

“It is time to pass this bipartisan legislation and spare Americans from being misled to think these wipes are flushable that results in unnecessary stress and costly repairs.”
—**Heidi Sanborn, Executive Director, National Stewardship Action Council**



Microplastics & Truth in Labeling

'Flushable' Wipes Flush Plastic to Sea and Shore

Researchers find that non-woven products are an underestimated source of microplastic in the marine environment.

Press release

Consultation launched to ban wet wipes containing plastic

A consultation on banning wet wipes containing plastic across the UK has been launched today under plans to tackle plastic pollution and clean up waterways.

From: [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs](#) and [The Rt Hon Thérèse Coffey](#)

Published 14 October 2023



UK government's impending ban on plastic-based wet wipes has industry and consumers talking

Local Governments Can Implement EPR!

Alameda County: 1st EPR Ordinance in the U.S.

- **7/24/12:** Adopts first EPR ordinance for meds in U.S.
- **12/29/14:** PhRMA and other plaintiff organizations file a Petition For Writ of Certiorari asking the U.S. Supreme Court to consider the case – [Petition text](#)
- **5/26/15:** Denied!
National Impact!
- EPR in U.S. allowed so long as the product has a public health and safety nexus




“We will win legally and will win in the court of public opinion as well,” Mr. Miley said.

In the Trenches: Getting EPR Done 5 years to pass, 13 ordinances, 2 state bills

1. 2013: SB 727 (Jackson) – **Failed to pass**
2. 2014: SB 1014 (Jackson) – **Failed to pass**
3. 2018: SB 212 (Jackson) – **Signed into**

Law



<small>CAPITOL OFFICE STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 2032 SACRAMENTO, CA 95814 TEL 916 651-4019 FAX 916 651-4919</small>	California State Legislature	<small>CHAIR SENATE JUDICIARY JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT</small>
<small>SANTA BARBARA COUNTY OFFICE 222 E. CARRILLO STREET SUITE 309 SANTA BARBARA, CA 93101 TEL 805-965-0862 FAX 805-965-0701</small>	SENATOR HANNAH-BETH JACKSON	<small>VICE CHAIR CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE WOMEN'S CAUCUS</small>
<small>VENTURA COUNTY OFFICE 300 E. ESPLANADE DRIVE SUITE 430 OXFORD, CA 93036 TEL 805-988-1940 FAX 805-988-1945</small>	NINETEENTH SENATE DISTRICT	<small>COMMITTEES BUDGET & FISCAL REVIEW ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ELECTIONS & CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS NATURAL RESOURCES & WATER</small>
		<small>JOINT COMMITTEES FAIRS, ALLOCATION & CLASSIFICATION LEGISLATIVE AUDIT</small>

October 30, 2014

BD.SUP. 14 NOV 6AM 11:27

Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
70 W Hedding St
San Jose CA 95110-1705

B/S Chair _____
BD of Supv. X
Clerk _____

Dear Board Members:

Over the last two years, I have worked with numerous stakeholders to develop legislation that would create a convenient and environmentally responsible home-generated prescription drug disposal program. These efforts included my hosting several large stakeholder meetings, working with legislative consultants, and meeting with hundreds of individuals with an interest in the safe handling and disposal of unused medications. During that time, I introduced two bills, SB 727 (2013) and SB 1014 (2014) in response to the feedback I received to help decrease the supply of unused prescription drugs in homes across California. Due to the current legislative climate, moving forward with these programs was unsuccessful.

I am now respectfully requesting your participation and help to move this critical issue forward in our state. Adopting a county ordinance similar to Alameda County's Safe Drug Disposal ordinance will help California residents prevent prescription drug abuse, address their disposal needs now, and increase support for a statewide solution.

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted the first Safe Medication Disposal Ordinance in the country in July 2012. Pharmaceutical manufacturers with medications being sold or distributed in Alameda County must participate in and fund a program to collect and dispose of unwanted drugs. The ordinance was challenged by Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, Generic Pharmaceutical Association, and Biotechnology Industry Organization on the basis that the ordinance violates the dormant Commerce Clause for interstate commerce and discriminates against out-of-county producers. In August 2013, the U.S. District Court upheld the ordinance, as did the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in September 2014.

Alameda County's ordinance may be found here:
http://www.acgov.org/aceh/safedisposal/documents/SDD_Ordinance.pdf

cc: ea Supervisor, ColExec, CoCounsel, R. Santiago

SB 1143 (Allen): Household Hazardous Waste Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

- NSAC-sponsored
- Introduced as HHW EPR **including vaping devices**
- #1 Recommendation from the CA Recycling Commission
- Vermont passed in 2023
- Support: Local governments, material managers, ENGOS, etc.
- Opposition: American Chemistry Council, CalChamber, etc.



SB 1143 Amended to PaintCare Expansion Act



- 6/10/24 amendments added PaintCare expansion
- 8/19/24 amendments removed HHW EPR and narrowed to the PaintCare Expansion Act
- Signed into law 9/29/2024

*“Passing EPR framework legislation is a multi-year process, and **we made enormous progress this first year.** What was best for California was to ensure the PaintCare expansion got done to keep costs down and the program working, and **then tackle the rest of the HHW stream next year allowing more time for negotiation.**”*

*Heidi Sanborn quoted in
Waste Advantage Magazine*



News ► Collection/Transfer

California is Poised to Expand Successful PaintCare Program

Posted
September 3, 2024

2023-2025 Legislative Session: PFAS

Became Law:

[AB 347 \(Ting\)](#): DTSC enforcement of existing PFAS prohibitions

[AB 2515 \(Papan\)](#): Menstrual products

[SB 682 \(Allen\)](#): Ban sale of products with PFAS

- Governor's desk for signature

Microplastics:

[AB 2214 \(Bauer-Kahan\)](#): Statewide Microplastics Strategy - **VETOED**

[AB 823 \(Boerner\)](#): Ban sale products with micro beads or glitter in products used as an abrasive to clean, exfoliate, or polish, in a non rinse off product. - Governor's desk for signature

“

Plastic has overtaken our world, from the soil that grows our food to the water we drink, the air we breathe, and even the products we use daily. With AB 823, California is taking a big step by banning personal care and household products that threaten our health and the environment.

**ASM. TASHA
BOERNER**

**PROTECTING
CALIFORNIANS
FROM TOXIC
MICROPLASTICS**



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National Expertise + Insights

NSAC & SAF host six national working groups. Here's your chance to hear from our nation's leading subject-matter experts:

- 1. Household Hazardous Waste** – advancing safer end-of-life management
- 2. Packaging & EPR Implementation** – unlocking the economic, & public health environmental benefits of recycling and a circular economy
- 3. Textile Circularity** – driving recycling, reuse, resale & innovation at scale
- 4. Recycling Refunds / Deposit-Return Systems** – scaling proven solutions to scale the collection and recycling of valuable materials
- 5. Illegal Single-use Ink Toner Cartridges** – protecting markets and consumers from fraud and deception

Our **National Working Groups** meet at least four times each year and sub-groups may meet more frequently. Ready to learn more or join?

Contact **Heath** at  heath@nsaction.us

NSAC Funding Organizations



ADVOCATING FOR A RESPONSIBLE, CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Join & Follow Us!



“Ten years from now, our goal is that nothing goes onto the market that has no end-of-life program in place.”

– Heidi Sanborn



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